

Chapter 6

Child Abuse and Neglect

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ABSTRACT

Child abuse and neglect is a global problem which needs attention from every corner of the world. This chapter aims to investigate the definitions, types and causes of child neglect and abuse, as well as their impacts on children, risk and protective factors associated with child abuse and neglect, and child abuse neglect prevention and intervention. This chapter will provide an insight into problems faced by child abuse and neglect victims in particular because they are extremely vulnerable and incapable of defending themselves. This will in turn provide a base for school counsellors to have introspection on the existing frame of strategies/policies with this sensitive section of the population. It may provide baseline for designing new strategies in accordance with the needs of the victims of child abuse. Further it will be a unique way to address this complex social problem.

INTRODUCTION

Worldwide child abuse and neglect is recognised as a significant public health concern which has adversely affected children's mental and physical health and has both immediate as well as long term effect on child's development. Child abuse or includes all forms of physical or emotional maltreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or commercial or other exploitation, which results harm to the child's health, existence, development, or decorum in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or

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power (Butchart, Phinney & Furness 2006). Research studies have highlighted that children who experience abuse and neglect in their early life are more vulnerable to have problems in social relationships and academic profile (Raby, et.al 2018).

Canadian Red Cross [CRC] (2019) defined child abuse and neglect as, *child abuse is any form of physical, emotional and/or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that causes injury or emotional damage to a child or youth.*

World Health Organization[WHO] (1999) defined child abuse as “*Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power*”

World Health Organization [WHO] (1999) defined child neglect as” *Neglect is the failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and causes or has a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible*”.

Convention on the Rights of the child [CRC] (2011) defined Neglect or negligent treatment as “*neglect means the failure to meet children’s physical and psychological needs, protect them from danger, or obtain medical, birth registration or other services when those responsible for children’s care have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so*”.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act [CAPTA] (2010) defines child abuse and neglect as: *Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] (2008) defines child maltreatment as any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child from birth through age 17 years.

BACKGROUND

Child abuse and neglect has long history. Children have been abused and neglected since times immemorial. Child abuse and neglect has shattered the lives of millions of the children. Research has shown that child abuse and neglect is linked to number of development problems in children which includes poor self-esteem, sense of

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